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Summary record of the 374th meeting
Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Friday, 23 February 2018, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Mr. Tatić (Vice-Chair)

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In the absence of Ms. Degener, Mr. Tatić, Vice-Chair, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Consideration of reports submitted by parties to the Convention under article 35 (*continued*)

Initial report of Slovenia (*continued*) (CRPD/C/SVN/1; CRPD/C/SVN/Q/1 and CRPD/C/SVN/Q/1/Add.1)

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Slovenia took places at the Committee table.*

Articles 11–20

2. **Ms. Vuk** (Slovenia), responding to questions put at the previous meeting, said that the Council for Persons with Disabilities, an independent tripartite body, was competent to review all legislation related to persons with disabilities and also monitored implementation of the Convention. It was composed of seven representatives of the Government, seven representatives of disability institutions and seven representatives of organizations of persons with disabilities. As of 2018, the Council had been allocated its own budget within the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities and could avail itself of expert administrative and technical assistance.

3. The governing body of the Foundation for the Financing of Disability and Humanitarian Organizations comprised 10 representatives of disability organizations, 10 representatives of humanitarian organizations and just 3 government representatives, thus ensuring that the Government had no undue influence on the Foundation's activities. The Foundation was responsible for deciding how funds were distributed to disability and humanitarian organizations: two thirds of the funds were earmarked for disability operations and one third for the operation of humanitarian organizations; the remaining 3 per cent covered the Foundation's operating costs. The Foundation provided an important additional source of funding for all the programmes carried out by disability organizations.

4. **Mr. Uršič** (Karitas Slovenia) said that measures of protection against natural disasters took account of the specific needs of persons with disabilities. The Civil Protection and Disaster Relief Administration made materials available in accessible formats for persons with visual or hearing impairments, and it was possible to make emergency calls in Braille and sign language. In addition, drills that made provision for the needs of persons with disabilities were carried out annually.

5. **Ms. Koc** (Slovenia) said that public facilities were required to allow safe and accessible entry and exit to all persons, including those with disabilities. In the event of an emergency, deaf people had the option of receiving assistance via text message from the public emergency centre. In addition, a dedicated call centre for deaf and hard-of-hearing persons was operational 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

6. **Ms. Močnik** (Slovenia) said that the Act Amending the Electronic Communications Act, adopted in 2017, had made it a requirement for all new vehicle models to be equipped with eCall technology; it had also introduced public mobile alerts via text message, making it simpler and faster to alert deaf and hard-of-hearing people to dangerous situations. The technological solutions developed by Slovenia to make emergency calls in text form had received recognition at the European level.

7. **Mr. Ferenc** (Slovenia) said that the right of deaf persons to sign language interpretation, in accordance with the Use of Slovenian Sign Language Act, was consistently observed by the police. In addition to making electronically available a list of sign language interpreters for police officers, the Government had concluded agreements with a number of individual interpreters to ensure coverage in all parts of Slovenia. The Police Academy cooperated with the Association of Slovene Sign Language Interpreters to provide training on the specific characteristics and needs of persons with disabilities. Furthermore, the website of the police administration featured short clips on safety and security in Slovenian Sign Language; thus far, 27 such clips, made together with the Slovenian Association of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, had been posted to the website.

8. **Ms. Velič** (Slovenia) said that in 2017 all judges and other court personnel had begun receiving training on how to deal appropriately with persons with special needs. Rules regarding proceedings had also been amended in 2017; summons to court now included a provision that stated that all persons with disabilities had the right to equal participation in court proceedings and that persons wishing to exercise that right should duly inform the court prior to their hearing to allow the court to accommodate their needs. Court websites also featured video clips in sign language that presented all the rights enjoyed by persons with disabilities.

9. With regard to Constitutional Court Decision No. U-I-146/07, the Civil Procedure Act had been superseded by the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities Act, which allowed all persons with disabilities, including those with visual impairments, full access to the court system. Some 250,000 euros had been earmarked in 2018 for making the necessary adjustments to Slovene courts to accommodate those with physical disabilities. Infrared transmission units, designed to enable hard-of-hearing persons to follow court proceedings, were expected to be available in 16 courts as from May 2018; the initiative had been coordinated together with the Association of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, whose representatives had inspected and approved the conference facilities already equipped with the system. The system was digital and standardized, and Association representatives had confirmed that it was appropriate. The system of induction loop and closed captions was not yet available, but would hopefully be so in the near future.

10. **Ms. Vuk** (Slovenia) said it was important to note that even though not all courts were adequately equipped, persons with disabilities simply had to inform the courts of their requirements; the court concerned would adapt its facilities and services accordingly.

11. **Ms. Velič** (Slovenia) said that 17 persons with disabilities were employed as prosecutors and 128 were employed as court personnel, including judges.

12. **Ms. Močnik** (Slovenia) said that the Ministry of Education was taking steps to promote compliance by schools with accessibility principles on their websites, in line with the new law on the accessibility of websites and mobile applications. The Government was encouraging all providers of web content to comply with accessibility principles. As part of those efforts, it had set up groups with representatives from all stakeholder communities operating in the areas of e-commerce and other sectors of digital society. One example was the Slovenian Digital Coalition, an open forum of equal partners and stakeholders discussing relevant issues.

13. **Ms. Šoln Vrbinc** (Slovenia) said that teachers often posted additional school materials and other information on school websites. Moreover, all children with special needs were provided with adapted materials and lessons by their teachers. Parents with disabilities were also given specially adapted information, and sign language interpretation was provided for parent-teacher meetings.

14. **Ms. Boškič** (Slovenia) said that courts, when assigning a guardian, explicitly set out the areas for which the guardian was responsible; thus, it was not a blanket assignment of powers. Rather, guardianship was intended to be a support mechanism. The legislature had adopted, in 2017, a Family Code under which parental rights had been extended and, more importantly, the deprivation of legal capacity of persons with psychosocial disabilities had been abolished. The Code would take effect in 2019. Furthermore, in order to avoid conflicts of interest, some limitations had been introduced as to who could be appointed as a guardian. A series of protection mechanisms had been put in place: since 2005, for instance, a child advocate was designated in the context of any guardianship proceedings, whether or not the child involved had a disability, in line with the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

15. **Mr. Uršič** (Karitas Slovenia) said that a number of NGOs were active in raising awareness about intellectual disabilities and in helping persons with such disabilities defend their rights.

16. **Ms. Vuk** (Slovenia) said that institutionalization had long been a challenging issue for Slovenia. The Government was strongly committed to deinstitutionalization and had earmarked some of the funds it received from the European Union to achieve

deinstitutionalization. In addition, it had adopted a resolution on the establishment of a social protection system, one of the goals of which was deinstitutionalization. However, it was important to put in place the necessary assistance services to allow persons who were deinstitutionalized to live autonomously and with dignity.

17. **Ms. Lovšin** (Slovenia) said that, since 2004, the Government had striven to reduce the number of people living in institutions and to increase the number of people receiving services at home or in a community. In 2004, one of the largest institutions had released 640 residents; 210 of those had been transferred to smaller living units or communities. In the past five years, 21 new living units had opened — a trend that was expected to continue. In the social protection system resolution, the Government had set a goal to achieve the ratio of one institutionalized person to one deinstitutionalized person. When the resolution had first been drafted, the ratio had been 2 to 1; by 2016, it had been reduced to 1.3 to 1.

18. New legislation on the provision of services to people with disabilities living at home or in communities had recently been adopted and, over the past three years, the number of people receiving such services had increased from 6,500 to 7,400. The Government had taken a systemic approach to deinstitutionalization; it had involved all stakeholders from the start and had prepared a wide-ranging analysis of needs and of ways to use European Union structural funds to cover those needs. Most of the deinstitutionalization exercise, including the building of additional housing, had been financed from such funds, which had amounted to €26 million. Units for an additional 1,100 people were currently being built. Four of those units were part of a pilot project being run by local communities, which the Government hoped to involve more extensively. Around €16 million would be used for projects aimed at giving people the option of staying in their homes and living autonomously, including through the development of information and communications technology. Some 10 million euros would be allocated to a special project to develop long-term care; a portion of those monies would be spent on awareness-raising.

19. **Mr. Uršič** (Karitas Slovenia) said that it was important to note that, while the figures mentioned might seem small, Slovenia was quite a small country, with just 2 million inhabitants. It was seriously committed to deinstitutionalization and to allowing persons with disabilities to live autonomously at home or in communities. Personal assistance services had been available for some 10 years now, and were always financed through public tenders and from the national budget. There were some 30 organizations offering personal assistance services, most of them organizations of persons with disabilities. The Personal Assistance Act adopted in 2017 provided for at least 30 hours of personal assistance per week for any person with disabilities. Round-the-clock services were also available to persons in need of such assistance. Personal assistance was considered a basic human right and, as such, was not based on beneficiaries' income levels and would be financed directly from the national budget, as from 1 January 2019.

20. **Ms. Vuk** (Slovenia) said that European Union funds had been used to develop and set up the services needed to achieve the goals of deinstitutionalization, long-term care and personal assistance. The services themselves would be funded from the national budget as from 2019. The national budget also helped to finance organizations of persons with disabilities and other NGOs that supported persons who wished to live autonomously at home or in communities. Up to 50 per cent of assistance at home was financed by local communities. In addition, every person in need of personal assistance for basic daily tasks had the right to receive an assistance allowance to cover related services.

21. The involuntary placement of a person in a mental health institution could only be ordered by the courts and only for a maximum period of one year. Any extension of that period also had to be decided by the courts. As with any preventive restriction of freedom, involuntary placement was closely monitored by the Ombudsman and other human rights actors, who made unannounced visits to places of deprivation of liberty. Secure wards for mental health patients were supervised by specialized staff, not by security guards. To solve the problem of overcrowding in the wards, the Government was seeking not to make them bigger, but to tackle the underlying causes of the problem and explore the possibility of more care in the community. At the end of 2017, the Government had approved a mental

health bill, which was currently before parliament and was expected to pass into law in April 2018.

22. **Ms. Ćobal** (Slovenia) said that the Mental Health Act explicitly prohibited sterilization or involuntary termination of pregnancy on grounds of mental disability. Involuntary placement or treatment in a mental health institution was only used for persons who posed a danger to themselves or others. Even then, it was only used as a last resort. The new mental health bill would shift the legal focus from institutionalization to prevention and treatment in the community. Once it had passed, the already low numbers of persons subjected to involuntary placement would be further reduced.

23. **Ms. Vuk** (Slovenia) said that the campaign "Vesna — To Live a Life Free of Violence", which had run from 2014 to 2015, had focused on violence against women, including particularly vulnerable women such as those with disabilities. As part of the same project, law enforcement officials and health and social workers had received training in detecting, preventing and reacting to violence against women.

24. **Ms. Lovšin** (Slovenia) said that Slovenia had a policy of zero tolerance towards violence or abuse against women with disabilities in institutions. The Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities had invested heavily to that end, training staff in prevention techniques and educating women in institutions to make them aware of the procedures open to them, which included both internal and external complaints mechanisms. All decisions made in respect of a complaint could be appealed.

25. **Ms. Vuk** (Slovenia) said that the Government believed that the best way to combat violence was through empowerment and awareness-raising. Without it, victims themselves might not recognize that they had been exposed to violence. With regard to research and development relating to assistive technology, the Jožef Stefan Institute and the University Rehabilitation Institute were developing technical aids, robotics, assistive devices, remote services and smart housing for persons with disabilities with a view to enabling them to live and work independently. The legal obligation for all new buildings, including private housing, to comply with accessibility standards was rigorously enforced by building inspectors.

26. **Mr. Uršič** (Karitas Slovenia) said that the Ministry of Culture provided funding to the Association of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing to promote the development of Slovenian Sign Language. It also funded the development of texts in Easy Read formats intended for persons with cognitive disabilities.

27. **Ms. Vuk** (Slovenia) said that medical aids for persons with sensory disabilities were covered by health insurance, while technical aids for persons with physical disabilities, such as adapted motor vehicles, were available via a voucher system. Assistance dogs were provided, not only for persons with visual impairments, but also to those with other disabilities. Slovenian Sign Language was recognized as an official language of the Republic of Slovenia and was celebrated and promoted each year on Slovenian Sign Language Day.

28. **Mr. Uršič** (Slovenia) said that Slovenia had been one of the first 25 countries in the world to enact specific legislation on the use of sign language, which the State recognized as the natural language of deaf persons. They had the right to use sign language when interacting with the public administration in any way, including in schools, police stations and the courts, as well as in shops and banks. Each deaf person could use the services of a publically funded and officially certified sign language interpreter for 30 hours per year — or up to 100 hours per year in the case of students who were deaf. About 1,000 deaf persons had availed themselves of those services.

29. **Ms. Močnik** (Slovenia) said that the forthcoming legislation on accessibility of public sector websites and mobile applications included provision for sign language interpretation, in order to ensure that deaf persons could access such information on an equal basis with others.

30. **Mr. Drašler** (Slovenia) said that, in 2017, the Ministry of Infrastructure and Spatial Planning had launched a nationwide sustainable mobility project for vulnerable groups, including persons with mental or physical disabilities, with the intention of facilitating their

access to public rail and road transport. The project made use of technology such as the Global Positioning System (GPS), speech recognition software and screen readers.

31. **Ms. Vuk** (Slovenia) said that currently only informal translations of the Committee's general comments were available. Steps to produce an official translation in the Slovene language would be taken shortly.

Articles 21–33

32. **Mr. Martin** said that he wished to know whether young people with intellectual disabilities were informed of the options available to them upon leaving school and who decided when they should leave. Were persons with disabilities, particularly those in institutions, able to access health services on an equal basis with non-disabled persons? With reference to persons with intellectual disabilities who lived in housing units, he wondered how many persons lived together in each unit and whether they were able to choose whom they lived with.

33. He understood that persons with intellectual disabilities often found it difficult to obtain paid employment in Slovenia and wished to know what plans were envisaged to address that situation, including by raising awareness among employers. He had been pleased to learn that sign language was used during election broadcasts and wished to know if all persons with disabilities, including those with intellectual disabilities, had the right to vote. Was information about where and how to vote made available in formats accessible to citizens with intellectual disabilities?

34. **Mr. Buntan** said that he wished to commend the authorities for their legislative initiative on the accessibility of websites and mobile applications. However, he remained concerned that not enough effort had been made to promote inclusive education by making such provisions obligatory in educational institutions. He would like clarification of whether sign language was legally recognized as an official language of Slovenia. While the Government's commitment to provide sign language interpretation was admirable, 30 hours per year of access to a publically funded sign language interpreter seemed far too little. He hoped the delegation could provide more information about an independent monitoring mechanism and how long it was expected to take to put it into place.

35. **Mr. Alsaif** said that he would appreciate more details about any measures to prevent children with disabilities being separated from their families and placed in institutions. He would also like to know what support was available for families of children with disabilities. In addition, he would welcome information about plans for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that also took account of the rights of persons with disabilities.

36. **Mr. Kim** Hyung Shik, noting that the focus of the Convention was on open, competitive and inclusive job opportunities, said that he was concerned by the fact that around 3,300 persons with disabilities were apparently employed in sheltered workshops across Slovenia, where they earned only about €20 per month. Moreover, the number of such workshops appeared to be increasing. Recent research had shown that around 25 per cent of persons in the sheltered workshops had the knowledge and skills required to work on the regular labour market. Were the authorities aware of that problem and how did they intend to address it?

37. He hoped that the delegation could throw some light on the fiscal position of workers with disabilities. Since they had to pay taxes, not only on their wages but also on any disability benefits they received, they earned less than retired persons in some cases. That was a powerful disincentive for them to seek employment. He understood that the National Council of Disabled People's Organizations of Slovenia had encountered difficulties in securing legal status as a corporate body and was consequently unable to access European Union funding. He would like to know whether the authorities intended to intervene to resolve that situation.

38. **Mr. Chaker** said that he wished to commend the State party for ratifying the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired, or Otherwise Print Disabled. He hoped the delegation could inform the

Committee about any measures envisaged to ensure that services related to culture, sport and tourism were accessible also to persons with disabilities. For example, were classic films available in formats that made them accessible to persons with visual impairments?

39. **Mr. Ishikawa**, noting that assistive technologies, such as screen readers, Braille displays and note-takers, and other technologies for persons who were blind or had visual impairments were usually very expensive, asked whether persons with disabilities in Slovenia could benefit from Government subsidies to help them purchase such devices.

40. **Mr. Rukhledev** said that he would appreciate information regarding whether the State party's framework for the promotion of inclusive education included training for teachers and other educational staff and specialists who worked with persons with disabilities. If so, he wondered whether that training involved the teaching of sign language interpretation. He also wished to know whether teachers and trainers from within the community of persons with disabilities were able and were encouraged to teach children with disabilities.

41. **Mr. Parra Dussan** said that it would be interesting to know in what circumstances persons with disabilities were sent to special education facilities. Could the delegation provide some figures on the proportion of persons in special education? In addition, he would appreciate further information on higher education opportunities for persons with disabilities. Specifically, were study grants or other forms of financial support available to help them continue with their studies?

42. **Mr. Basharu** said that he wished to know what status Braille held in the State party. Paragraph 223 of the State party's report (CRPD/C/SVN/1) stated that the electoral commission was only obliged to make one polling station accessible to persons with disabilities and that voters who wished to cast their votes there must provide three days' notice. It would be advisable to make all polling stations accessible to persons with disabilities. Voting and electoral materials should also be available in formats such as Braille, Easy Read and sign language.

43. **Mr. Kabue** said that it would be useful to learn whether the State party provided continuous training for persons with disabilities who needed to use its websites and mobile applications. In its replies to the list of issues (CRPD/C/SVN/Q/1/Add.1), the State party had indicated that "mentally incompetent" persons were not permitted to marry. It had further stated that the registrars who officiated marriages were not fit to assess mental competence. He wondered what measures the State party had taken to ensure that persons with mental or intellectual impairments were not denied the right to marry on the basis of a registrar's judgment and that the assessment of an individual as "mentally incompetent" did not amount to discrimination.

44. He was encouraged to hear that employers in the State party had taken a positive approach to the quota system for the employment of persons with disabilities, but would be grateful for additional information on the functioning and purpose of the fund to which employers who failed to meet the quota were expected to contribute. He would also appreciate further explanation as to how the co-financing of workplace adaptations by the Disability Fund and the Pension and Disability Insurance Institute worked. How did the Government ensure that workplace adaptations were done properly? Lastly, he would welcome further information about the voting aids available to persons with visual impairments.

45. **Mr. Babu** said that he wished to commend the State party's adoption of the new National Assembly Elections Act. He noted, however, that only 56.61 per cent of polling stations in Slovenia had been accessible to persons with disabilities in the 2017 presidential elections. He wished to know what action the State party planned to take to make 100 per cent of polling states fully accessible to persons with disabilities in the future. Furthermore, it would be useful to know what proportion of decision-making positions in the State party, particularly elected positions, were held by persons with disabilities.

46. **Mr. You** Liang said that he would be interested to know how many persons with disabilities had been elected to the Slovene parliament and how many of the proposals put forward by those members had come to fruition. He would also be interested in hearing

whether anything had been done to recognize and foster the artistic potential of persons with disabilities. He would welcome information on how the State party planned to improve its data-collection methods in order to compile precise data and develop databases containing concrete information on the persons with disabilities living in Slovenia, rather than relying on simple surveys. Lastly, he would be grateful for further information on how the State party had included disability-related issues in its efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and attain the Sustainable Development Goals.

47. **Mr. Ruskus** said that he would like to know whether there were sectoral focal points within the Government for matters relating to the implementation of the Convention and whether there was a mechanism in place to facilitate coordination between focal points. If there was such mechanism, what institutional capacity did it have and how was its influence over the policies of other sectors of public administration effectively ensured? He would be grateful if the delegation could clarify whether the Government had fully restored the support available to persons with disabilities, which had been curtailed as a result of austerity measures. He further wished to know whether the State party had taken any measures to address the delays relating to the right to disability pension and insurance for persons with physical disabilities under the Pension and Disability Insurance Act. It would be helpful if the delegation could specify what measures had been taken to enable the national umbrella organization of persons with disabilities to acquire legal personality. Lastly, he would welcome more information about the transfer of institutionalized persons with disabilities from large institutions to smaller housing units, including how many persons were living in such units, where they were located, how the persons living there could gain legal capacity and what kind of support was offered to ensure their full inclusion in the community.

48. **The Chair** said that he was curious to know how the State party took into account the will and preferences of persons living in supported housing units. He wished to remind the delegation of two questions raised by Ms. Degener at the previous meeting. First, the Committee would welcome information on the State party's position regarding the draft Additional Protocol to the Oviedo Convention of the Council of Europe concerning the protection of human rights and dignity of persons with mental disorders with regard to involuntary placement and involuntary treatment. Secondly, the Committee would appreciate information on the ways in which the State party addressed the intersectional discrimination experienced by some persons with disabilities on the basis of their ethnicity and sexuality.

The meeting was suspended at 11.40 a.m. and resumed at noon.

49. **Ms. Vuk** (Slovenia) said that, pursuant to the new National Assembly Elections Act, all polling stations must be accessible to all voters, including persons with disabilities, as of 1 February 2018. Full accessibility would thus be ensured at the two elections scheduled for 2018.

50. **Ms. Močnik** (Slovenia) said that, under the new National Assembly Elections Act, persons with disabilities were able to cast their votes with the assistance of another person or by using assistive devices for persons who were blind or had visual impairments. They were also entitled to vote at home or by mail. The website of the National Electoral Committee had been made available in sign language and augmented text format.

51. **Ms. Vuk** (Slovenia) added that sign language interpretation was provided at all public events that were part of political campaigns.

52. **Ms. Velić** (Slovenia) said that people were not automatically stripped of their right to vote if they were deprived of their legal capacity. Such persons were interviewed to determine whether their right to vote should also be curtailed. In cases where legal capacity was only partially denied, the right to vote was never curtailed. However, those arrangements would change in 2019, when the practice of depriving persons of their legal capacity would be abolished.

53. **Ms. Sarajlić** (Slovenia) said that children with disabilities and non-disabled children had the same rights in Slovenia. Under the Constitution, elementary education was publicly funded and obligatory for all children. The Elementary School Act established that all

children who had completed elementary education could continue to higher levels of schooling. Students could remain in education for a further three years after elementary school; those enrolled in special programmes could continue there until the age of 26.

54. **Ms. Šoln Vrbinc** (Slovenia) said that an orientation committee proposed the most suitable programme for all children that was closest to their home. Most children with disabilities attended mainstream schools, where they were provided with assistance and adaptations to suit their needs. Counselling and educational support services were also available. With regard to statistics, 1.54 per cent of all children were enrolled in special school programmes, and 0.39 per cent attended special training institutions, where they could be provided with more support and have the opportunity to participate in additional activities, such as learning sign language and computer skills. Such special programmes also offered smaller class sizes for children with autism or with hearing or visual impairments, and the teachers had special training. The standard of education in such programmes, however, was the same as in mainstream schools.

55. A special programme was proposed for persons with moderate to severe intellectual impairments up to the age of 26, in which they were prepared for independent life and work. Special programmes were also provided for children with intellectual impairments within mainstream schools so as to promote peer interaction. Children with moderate intellectual impairments could study in schools specializing in vocational training.

56. Under the Elementary Education Act, all children, including children with disabilities, who lived more than four kilometres from their elementary school were provided with free transportation. Those who lived less than four kilometres away but had difficulties travelling to school could be offered free transportation if the orientation committee deemed it necessary, and arrangements could be made for the child to stay at school from Monday to Friday and receive free transport home on the weekends. Some of the funding that Slovenia received from the European Social Fund was earmarked for programmes to promote the inclusion of children with disabilities. A network of support institutions was being established to facilitate the inclusion of children with disabilities. A new Higher Education Act, which had come into force in 2017, allowed students with disabilities to extend their education by one year and receive financial assistance for that purpose.

57. Awareness-raising activities were carried out to sensitize school directors and teaching staff to the challenges faced by pupils with disabilities. All teacher training programmes included modules on inclusive education. Teachers working with children with disabilities took part in special supplementary training. Furthermore, all teachers employed by special schools for persons who were deaf or hard of hearing must be competent in sign language. Sign language interpreters were also deployed to assist pupils who needed their services in mainstream schools.

58. **Ms. Sarajlić** (Slovenia) said that all students with disabilities in mainstream schools were granted longer study periods, had extra time for exams terms and were provided with other forms of support to enable them to succeed.

59. **Ms. Boškič** (Slovenia) said that the Government's policy had always been to discourage the institutionalization of children with disabilities and to keep families together. To that end, special benefits were provided to families of children with disabilities, such as an extra 90 days of maternity leave, financial support to cover the income loss incurred by the inability to work full time due to care commitments and a special childcare allowance. Support was also available for parents with disabilities, including social care services provided in the home. Children were only separated from their families in extreme cases, but even then every attempt was made to return them to their homes as soon as possible.

60. With regard to the right to marry, even persons who had been deprived of their legal capacity were permitted to marry. Local registry officials simply had a duty to ensure that those entering into marriage understood the legal responsibilities it entailed. As to intersectional discrimination, the Protection Against Discrimination Act, passed in 2016, was intended to combat all forms of discrimination. The Office of the Advocate of the Principle of Equality, set up pursuant to the Act, would publish its first report in 2019.

61. **Ms. Čobal** (Slovenia), acknowledging the importance of protecting human rights in the field of biomedicine, said that the Government had not yet taken a position on the draft Additional Protocol to the Oviedo Convention. It would do so only after the matter had been carefully studied by the national committee on medical ethics and the Ministry of Health.

62. **Ms. Lovšin** (Slovenia), noting that deinstitutionalization was a long-term process, said that persons with disabilities were being moved from large institutions to smaller homes of up to 24 persons; some housed no more than 8. Those homes were being built within local communities in order to promote social inclusion. The needs and preferences of individuals and couples were taken into account when they moved into such a home. The final transition to independent living in individual apartments was provided for in legislation that would enter into force the following year.

63. **Ms. Vuk** (Slovenia) emphasized that the homes described by her colleague were a temporary solution. The aim was eventually to move the persons concerned into housing communities and then into individual housing units.

64. **Mr. Uršič** (Slovenia) said that all forms of discrimination in the field of employment were prohibited. Vocational rehabilitation centres provided training for persons with disabilities to increase their employability. There were over 20 training centres, covering all areas of the country. Persons with moderate to severe intellectual disabilities were given the opportunity to perform occupational activities that were suited to their abilities. They were not considered to be employed so did not receive a salary, but they did receive compensation for their work, in addition to the disability benefits to which they were entitled. Legislation currently under consideration would enable persons with disabilities who were currently working in sheltered workshops — which the Government referred to as occupational day-care centres — to seek regular employment. If they were unable to meet the requirements of their new job, they would be able to return to the centres.

65. There were social enterprises in which 30 per cent of posts were reserved for persons with disabilities. In addition, some companies were subject to a quota system for employment of persons with disabilities. Those that failed to meet the quota were required to outsource a proportion of their work to a company that employed persons with disabilities or to contribute to a special fund that was used to promote the employment of such persons.

66. **Ms. Vuk** (Slovenia) said that there was no central database of information on persons with disabilities. A task force had recently been established to discuss ways in which data collection could be improved, taking into account the Government's reporting obligations.

67. **Ms. Možek** (Slovenia) said that the accessibility requirements set forth in the Construction Act were applicable to tourist attractions. Persons with disabilities and their companions were exempt from tourist tax. The Government had recently adopted a sustainable tourism strategy which placed particular emphasis on the accessibility of tourist attractions to persons with disabilities. Museums had been equipped with touch technology to ensure that exhibitions were accessible to persons with visual impairments. Cinemas organized film showings for such persons, in cooperation with the Association of the Blind and Partially Sighted.

68. **Mr. Uršič** (Slovenia) said that the national theatre held special performances that were adapted to the needs of persons with visual impairments. Various associations, such as the Slovenian Paraplegic Association, organized activities to develop the artistic potential of persons with disabilities; mouth and foot painting exhibitions were held regularly, for example. The Government subsidized the purchase of technical aids that enabled blind persons to use information and communications technologies and access the Internet. The National Council of Disabled People's Organizations of Slovenia was an independent body that was recognized by the Government and was invited to participate in various councils and committees. If it wished to acquire legal personality, it would need to establish itself as another type of body, such as a federation.

69. **Mr. Ponikvar** (Slovenia) said that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was being implemented through a national development strategy, which contained several objectives that were directly related to disability issues, such as access to social protection. Sectoral plans would be drawn up to ensure the effective implementation of that strategy.

70. **Ms. Koc** (Slovenia) said that the Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning — which was responsible for work on Sustainable Development Goal 11, on making cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable — had set up a council that was responsible for ensuring that disability issues were taken into account in urban planning and construction. The Ministry issued a call for tenders each year for awareness-raising projects in the field of urban planning. Over the period 2016–2017, two projects dealing with disability issues had been financed.

71. **Ms. Vuk** (Slovenia), thanking the Committee members for their pertinent questions, said that her Government was truly committed to implementing the Convention and had taken many measures to accommodate the needs of all persons with disabilities. Nevertheless, it was aware that there was still work to be done and it looked forward to making further improvements. She also wished to thank the NGO representatives who had attended the dialogue. The Government had developed a strong relationship with organizations of persons with disabilities and was continually encouraged by them to find new ways of protecting and promoting the rights of persons with disabilities.

72. **Mr. Ruskus**, thanking the delegation for engaging in an open and interactive dialogue, said that he would like to commend the State party on its adoption of the Personal Assistance Act, which he hoped would drive the transition towards independent and inclusive living arrangements for persons with disabilities. By way of conclusion, he wished to make a few recommendations. In particular, the State party should step up its efforts to shift from a social protection approach to a human rights approach to disability and to combat discrimination and promote full social inclusion. More generally, it should take further steps to enable persons with disabilities to exercise their rights fully and effectively. It should take into account the Convention and the Committee's general comments when developing new legislation and policies on disability issues and ensure that organizations of persons with disabilities were fully involved in decision-making relating to the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals.

73. The Committee welcomed the State party's commitment to implementing the Convention and enabling persons with disabilities to make decisions about their own lives with appropriate support, to participate actively in decision-making processes and to live independently in an inclusive society on an equal basis with others.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.